

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
New Castle County Courthouse
500 N. King Street, Suite 9425
Wilmington, Delaware 19801
Phone: 302-255-0405
Fax: 302-255-2236
E-Mail: ronald.keen@state.de.us
<http://www.dvcc.state.de.us>



DV News

SUMMER ISSUE
Volume 1, Issue 3

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Quarterly Newsletter

Inside:

Impact of Domestic Violence on Children
page 2

Fatal Incident Review Team
page 3

Secretary Ford Retires
page 4

Secretary Mitchell Appointed
page 4

Training Update
page 5

DV Police Unit Coordinator Appointed
page 6

VAWA
page 6

Subcommittee Summaries
page 7

ANNUAL VICTIMS' TRIBUTE

By: *Ronald T. Keen*

On April 21, 2004, the 13th Annual Victims' Tribute was held at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover. The Delaware Victims' Rights Task Force sponsors the event, which is the centerpiece of Victims' Rights Week. Diane Glenn, Chairperson of the Victims' Rights Task Force, said, "The Tribute is to honor those who have died and remember those crime victims who continue daily to struggle with the aftermath of their victimization."

Governor Ruth Ann Minner shared her thoughts on victimization with the audience of about 150. The featured speakers were Debbie and Rob Smith of Virginia. Mrs. Smith was the victim of a sexual assault in the late 1980s. She and her husband, Rob who is a retired police officer, speak around the country concerning their experiences in the hope that they will be of some benefit to others.

Other speakers included Delaware Attorney General M. Jane Brady and James Hutchison, Mayor of Dover. Other participants in the ceremony included the Delaware State Police Pipes and Drums, the Delaware State Police Honor Guard, the Delaware Youth Chorus, survivor Carol Siemons, and survivor Jean Lange. The Master of Ceremonies was Victims' Rights Task Force Co-Chairperson, Mariann Kenville-Moore.

(Continued on page 5)



IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

John Humphrey, Executive Director, Children's Advocacy Center of Delaware



In a recent interview with John Humphrey, Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Center of Delaware, discussion focuses on the issue of the impact of domestic violence on children. We asked John four questions concerning the issue:

What does the Children's Advocacy Center of Delaware do to assist children who are victims of crime and/or who witness domestic violence?

"We provide a child friendly setting where children who may have either been victims or witness of abuse, domestic violence, or other serious crimes can come to be interviewed by a person specially trained in interviewing children. There are a lot of agencies and professionals who become involved in these investigations such as law enforcement, Division of Family Services (DFS), Attorney General's Office, medical and mental health staff that need information from the child. It is our goal to interview the child once with all the involved parties watching the interview take place live in an adjoining room and obtain all of the information needed by all agencies. By conducting one good interview with the child, we are minimizing the trauma a child and their family must endure and minimizing problems for those cases that may be prosecuted."

What are some ways that the Children's Advocacy Center of Delaware improves system responses to children and their families?

"We look at ourselves as the coordinators of the case. When a case is referred by either law enforcement or DFS, we coordinate their schedules with the availability of the victim, prosecutors, medical and mental health staff to find the best time for the child to be interviewed. We provide "one-stop shopping" in that if the child needs a medical exam as a result of what occurred, we will schedule the interview first with the exam immediately

following. We will soon be adding a mental health assessment piece and also provide those services or at least coordinate those services for a future date while the family is here. Hopefully when they leave here, they have completed most of the necessary steps of the investigation and assessments.

We also track all cases referred from the moment they are scheduled until closure by all agencies. We conduct case review team meetings on all cases referred twice a month in each county. Our Case Review Specialists maintain weekly contact with the supervisors of the agencies to prepare for the team meetings. At each meeting, the supervisor brings updates on the open cases to the table so that everyone involved can be updated. It is really a great tool to keep the lines of communication open and minimizes the chances of cases "falling through the cracks."

How are cases referred to the Children's Advocacy Center of Delaware and how many children do you serve a year? Are you able to meet the demand?

"We are presently having about 1,200 children referred each year for forensic interviews and 350 for medical examinations. In addition to our having a Forensic Interviewer at each Center, we also have Dr. Allan DeJong at A.I. duPont Hospital full-time and the services of part-time Pediatric Nurse Practitioners at our Dover and Georgetown Centers. We recently opened our third Center, which is located in Dover, and relocated our former Milford Center to Georgetown. Those two Centers along with our Center in Wilmington have resulted in us having one Center in each county to handle cases. We are presently able to meet the demand for services during the day, however we are still lacking the resources to handle cases in the early evening and after hours. Our Forensic Interviewers are on call for urgent cases, but there is still a demand for evening hours. We are trying to assess and address that concern."

IMPACT OF DV ON CHILDREN *(continued)**John Humphrey, Children's Advocacy Center***DELAWARE'S FATAL INCIDENT REVIEW TEAM***By: Bridget V. Poulle*

John, look into your crystal ball and tell us what you see as far as needs and resources in your field 5 years from now.

"Handling cases of child abuse on a daily basis is a difficult task for even the most seasoned professionals. This field demands professionals who are specially trained to deal with these cases. Delaware is still lacking in resources to address these cases and all agencies find themselves in constant need of additional resources. New Castle County is lucky enough to have agencies system wide that specialize in handling, investigating, assessing, and prosecuting these cases. The same is not true for Kent and Sussex Counties.

Every child and their family deserves to have the professionals involved in their case specially trained and dedicated solely to these cases. As an example, it is not unusual in some areas of the State to have a detective handling burglaries most of the time suddenly be assigned a child abuse case for which they have no special training or expertise, or a social worker that usually deals with treatment issues suddenly finding themselves in the middle of a child abuse investigation. We need the resources statewide to handle each case in a standardized consistent manner.

There shouldn't be any question or doubt when it is alleged a child has been abused or witnessed a serious crimes what steps should be taken to handle that case. We have come a long way in Delaware, but our work is no where near finished. For our organization, I can see us having additional forensic interviewers at each Center to handle cases on a regular basis after hours."

John has been the Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Center of Delaware since 1997. He also serves on the Child Protection Accountability Commission, Child Death Review Panel, Abuse Intervention Committee, and the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's Children and Domestic Violence Subcommittee.

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council works to improve Delaware's response to domestic violence through research, education, policy development and legislation. In June 1996, Governor Thomas R. Carper signed into law the Domestic Violence Fatal Incidents Review Act, establishing a team to investigate and review the facts and circumstances of all domestic violence related fatalities occurring in Delaware.

The ultimate purpose for reviewing domestic violence fatalities is to prevent such deaths in the future. By conducting system audits of state agencies and private organizations that had contact with the deceased victim and/or the alleged perpetrator, the system's response to domestic violence may be improved. Steps may be taken to prevent future deaths and injuries by making changes to existing policies and practices and by identifying gaps in services and developing programs to fill those gaps.

Confidentiality is maintained throughout the review process and is required by statute. The records of all reviews are confidential and are exempt from the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act in Title 29 of the Delaware Code. Reports published by the review team include only aggregate data and do not identify specific cases. The review team members are established by statute and cover the range from chief judge to victim advocate.

The 2004 FIRT Report contains cumulative data collected from forty cases. According to the data, a total of fifty-seven deaths resulted from those forty cases. The majority of those deaths, thirty-four (59%) occurred as the result of shooting, twelve deaths (21%) were caused by stabbing.

The complete 2004 State of Delaware Fatal Incident Review Team Report will be available on the DVCC website (www.dvcc.state.de.us) in July 2004.

SECRETARY FORD RETIRES

The Honorable James L. Ford, Jr., Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, retired from his post on April 30, 2004. Mr. Ford, who was appointed by Governor Ruth Ann Minner in January 2001, oversaw the Division of State Police, Capitol Police, Division of

Alcoholic Beverage Control and Tobacco Enforcement, Delaware Emergency Management Agency, Office of Highway Safety and Division of Communications.

While Cabinet Secretary, Ford also served as a member of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, chairing the Law Enforcement Subcommittee. During Ford's chairmanship, the Subcommittee was successful in gaining the endorsement of the Delaware Police Chief's Council on the "Model Policy on Police Officer Domestic Violence." The Policy, developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, (IACP), codifies how police departments are to respond to domestic violence incidents involving a police officer. During Ford's tenure, the Law Enforcement Subcommittee also developed the Intimate Partner (IP) Report, created to capture data specific to intimate partner violence in Delaware. The IP Report was implemented by the Delaware Criminal Justice Information System in 2003.

Secretary Ford worked in law enforcement for more than 50 years to serve as Colonel and Superintendent of the Delaware State Police. He retired from that post in 1976 and subsequently served as Chair of Delaware Technical and Community College's Terry Campus Criminal Justice Department until 1981 when he assumed the position of Assistant to the President for College Relations at Delaware Tech.

From 1981 until 2001 Secretary Ford served as the Chairman of the Council on Police Training. He also served as a Commissioner of the Sentac Accountability Commission from 1981 through 2001.

SECRETARY MITCHELL APPOINTED

Secretary Ford holds a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree from the University of Delaware. He has instructed at the University of Delaware and in 1977 was inducted into its Wall of Fame.

The DVCC thanks Secretary Ford for his contributions to Delaware's efforts to end domestic violence.

SECRETARY MITCHELL APPOINTED

David B. Mitchell was sworn in as Governor Minner's new Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security on June 2, 2004, immediately following his confirmation by the State Senate.

In a recent press release Governor Minner stated, "David's thorough experience in law enforcement and his reputation for fairness in leading the Maryland State Police for eight years made him a good choice for this important position." Mitchell, 53, served as Superintendent of the Maryland State Police, the seventh largest law enforcement agency in the country, and in that position was the primary law enforcement advisor to then-Gov. Parris Glendening. Mitchell is also credited with establishing Maryland's first statewide domestic violence intervention and investigation team.

Other accomplishments of Mitchell include: Chair of the Governor's Homeland Security Work Group, creating legislation and revising procedures and plans to better prepare and protect Maryland. He created the "Cease Fire" initiative, aimed at reducing gun crime in Maryland and worked with the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence.

Mitchell also implemented new initiatives in computer crimes, labor relations, DNA forensic investigations and community policing.

As the new Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, David B. Mitchell will also serve as a member of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

DVCC TRAINING UPDATE

By: Eileen F. Ondra



*LeVerta Bradford, Families In Transition
Milford Public Library, May 8, 2004*

During the spring months, the DVCC and staff have been busy with the training of licensed daycare providers and other agencies on the topics of domestic violence, children and domestic violence, and dating violence. Trainings were held at Milford Public Library, Bear Library, and the Newark Senior Center. The training is approved by the Office of Child Licensing and each attendee is credited with 3.5 clock hours.

Approximately 150 daycare providers were trained. Speakers for the trainings included: Laverta Bradford, People's Place; Karen Dougherty, Christiana Care, S.A.N.E. Program; and Terry Kaiser, Children's Advocacy Center of Delaware.. The interactive, multimedia program focused on dynamics of domestic violence, the impact of violence on children, and appropriate referral for victims of domestic violence and their children.

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council staff also participated in the 10th Annual School Age Conference at Clayton Hall, sponsored by the Family and Workplace Connection and a one-day training for National Women's Health Week at Brandywine Counseling, located on the Wilmington Riverfront. Several agencies participated in this event; including the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (Noel Jones), Wilmington Police Department (Stephanie Rensch/Mona Bayard), Department of Justice (Mariann Kenville-Moore), and public health nurses from the March of Dimes and Smart Start Programs.

Training for Delaware Department of Health and Social Services was held in May and June for counselors assisting clients with domestic abuse, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Dr. Denise Michultka, from the Liberty Center for Victims of Torture, located in Philadelphia, spoke on cultural issues surrounding the topic. Barbara Ridge, Executive Director, Delaware Children of Alcoholics; Carolanne O'Brien, Department of Labor; and Helen McDonnell, Delaware Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, were also speakers.



*Terry Kaiser, Children's
Advocacy Center*

VICTIMS' TRIBUTE (Continued from page 1)



Governor Ruth Ann Minner, Debbie and Rob Smith

Each year the Task Force recognizes individuals, agencies, and volunteers who have performed outstanding work in the victims' rights movement. This year the Outstanding Professional was Mirta Collazo, Victim Services, Georgetown Police Department, and the Outstanding Program was the Sexual Assault Network of Delaware (SAND). Recognized as Outstanding Volunteer, was the Department of Justice Kent County Senior Victim Advocate Program, which includes Glenda Keighton, Henrietta Morgan, Jacqueline Pulling, Richard Pulling, Sr., and Phyllis Racz.

DV POLICE UNIT COORDINATOR APPOINTED



Captain Harry W. Downes, Jr., was selected to be the Coordinator of the Domestic Violence Unit of the Delaware State Police in September of 2003, replacing Lieutenant Mark Daniels who had held the post for three years. In this statewide

position, Captain Downes is responsible for domestic violence related investigations, policies, and coordinating with state and government agencies involving domestic violence issues.

The Delaware State Police (DSP) responded to 9,441 criminal domestic incidents in 2003. Each of the 8 Delaware State Police troops responded to criminal domestic incidents with Troop 3 recording the highest total, 3,398. The unit includes seven full-time detectives statewide.

Captain Downes' 20-1/2 year career with the Delaware State Police has included working with the DSP Special Investigations Unit and supervising the Community Policing Unit in Sussex and Kent Counties. He also served as co-coordinator of the Department of Public Safety's "Strong Communities Initiative". Captain Downes also has served as the supervisor of Patrol Division, Troop 3.

Captain Downes has a number of goals for the DSP Domestic Violence Unit. They include improving the resource information that is given to victims of domestic violence, conducting public relations campaigns promoting domestic violence awareness, providing domestic violence training for police officers, and ensuring that police officers process domestic violence crime scenes properly.

VAWA IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

By: Maureen Querey

On May 20, 2004, the State of Delaware was awarded \$833,000 under the Office of Violence Against Women, FY 2004 S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program. Although this award represents a 4.5% decrease from FY 2003, the VAWA Implementation Committee is committed to continuing programs which address the following goals: improve access to legal services, referrals, counseling, and safety resources to women victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, especially women who are members of underserved and minority populations; provide on-going support to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, improve effective prosecution of cases involving domestic violence; provide stricter law enforcement in cases involving violence against women through improved policies and procedures; and improve technology to enhance the current reporting system to identify cases which involve sexual assault and domestic violence.

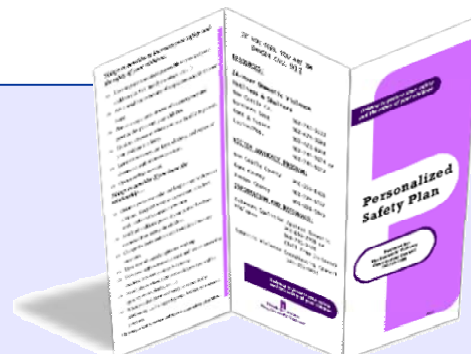
SUMMER TRAINING AND EVENT CALENDAR

July 28, Henrietta Johnson Medical Center, "Domestic Violence Training for Healthcare Professionals"

August 28, Delaware National Guard Family Readiness Volunteer Training, "Children and Domestic Violence" and "Healthy Family Relationships After War"

Law Enforcement Training Conference: Mid-November (call the DVCC office for more details)

To request DVCC Safety Plans or Resource Cards, contact Kenzel Messick
Phone: 302-255-0405
Email: Kenzel.Messick@state.de.us
Website: www.dvcc.state.de.us



DVCC SUBCOMMITTEE SUMMARIES

Children and Domestic Violence

Co-Chairs: Representative Deborah Hudson and Secretary Cari DeSantis

- ♦ Goals and recommendations compiled by the group given high, medium, or low priority
- ♦ All goals and recommendations being addressed
- ♦ Collaborative grant to be submitted to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Bright Future for Children Initiative

Corrections

Co-Chairs: Commissioner Stan Taylor and Geri Lewis-Loper

- ♦ VAWA-funded domestic violence and sexual assault statewide pager activated 4/22/04
- ♦ The idea of domestic violence counseling for inmates is being explored

Courts

Co-Chairs: Chief Judge Chandlee Johnson Kuhn and Senator Liane Sorenson

- ♦ Sentence modification notification requirement of Victims' Bill of Rights discussed
- ♦ Staff from Family Court, Department of Justice, and the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence to attempt to develop a system to expedite notification to victims of sentence modifications

Immigration

Co-Chairs: Mary Davis and Maria Picazo

- ♦ Information sheet of immigrant services being developed for courts
- ♦ Committee members attended Immigration Conference at University of Delaware in April
- ♦ Sussex County developing a multidisciplinary team to process problem cases

Law Enforcement

Co-Chairs: Secretary of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, David B. Mitchell, Chief Jeffrey Horvath and President Judge Henry duPont Ridgely

- ♦ Ad Hoc group developing shortened report form for non-criminal domestic violence incidents
- ♦ Training events being developed

Legislative

Co-Chairs:

Senator Patricia M. Blevins and Attorney General M. Jane Brady

- ♦ Revision legislation for Violent Crimes Compensation Board drafted
- ♦ Idea of granting privilege through legislation to sexual assault workers reviewed
- ♦ Victims' Bill of Rights issues reviewed

Medical

Co-Chairs: Dr. Matthew Hoffman and Vincent J. Poppiti, Esq.

- ♦ Training for healthcare professionals being developed
- ♦ Resource manual for medical providers under review

Treatment and Resources

Co-Chairs: Cynthia M. Boehmer and Public Defender Lawrence M. Sullivan

- ♦ Brochures detailing the effect of domestic violence on children who witness domestic violence being developed for domestic violence professionals
- ♦ Available services for children and their families to be included in the brochure

Batterers' Intervention Program Certification Panel

Staff:

Bridget V. Poulle

- ♦ The four certified programs begin 3 month certification renewal process
- ♦ Bilingual program from Georgetown under review

Fatal Incident Review Team

Co-Chairs:

Cynthia M. Boehmer and Vincent J. Poppiti, Esq.

- ♦ 2004 edition of Fatal Incident Review Report being developed

Details concerning training and events
are posted on the DVCC website at:

www.dvcc.state.de.us

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
New Castle County Courthouse
500 N. King Street, Suite 9425
Wilmington, Delaware 19801
Phone: 302-255-0405
Fax: 302-255-2236
E-Mail: ronald.keen@state.de.us
www.dvcc.state.de.us



DVCC Staff:

Ronald T. Keen
Executive Director
302-255-0410

Bridget V. Poulle
Program Coordinator
302-255-0406

Maureen Querey
VAWA Planner/Monitor
302-255-0407

Eileen Ondra
Trainer/Educator
302-255-0408

Kenzel V. Messick
Senior Secretary
302-255-0409

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Members:

Chair: Honorable Patricia M. Blevins, DE State Senator
Vice Chair: Honorable Chandlee Johnson Kuhn, Chief Judge, DE Family Court
Cynthia M. Boehmer, Program Director, Families in Transition
Honorable M. Jane Brady, DE Attorney General
Mary Davis, Chair, Domestic Violence Task Force
Honorable Cari DeSantis, Secretary, Dept. of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families
Dr. Matthew Hoffman, Board of Medical Practice Representative
Chief Jeffrey Horvath, Dover Police Department
Honorable Deborah Hudson, DE House of Representatives
Geraldine Lewis-Loper, Director, Elderly Victim Services Program, DE Center for Justice
Honorable David B. Mitchell, Secretary, Department of Safety and Homeland Security
Maria Picazo, Executive Director, Abriendo Puertas
Vincent J. Poppiti, Esq., Blank Rome LLP
Honorable Henry duPont Ridgely, President Judge, Superior Court
Honorable Liane Sorenson, Commission on Family Law Representative
Honorable Lawrence M. Sullivan, DE Public Defender
Honorable Stanley W. Taylor, Commissioner, Department of Correction

<http://www.dvcc.state.de.us>

Contributions to this issue provided by DVCC staff, Photography: John Humphrey, Children's Advocacy Center and Eileen Ondra, DVCC